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ABSTRACT

In October 1978 a survey was conducted of Friends of the Library (FOL) activities during the preceding 6 years in support of public, branch, academic, public school, media center, institution, and special libraries in Ohio. The purpose of the survey was to identify and provide a comprehensive summary listing of the recent activities of Friends groups. A total of 315 libraries responded to the survey with 128 of them reporting FOL activities. Others reported interest in organizing or reactivating FOL groups. The type of FOL activities reported include fund raising and donation, acquisition of special collections and physical materials, sponsorship of programs, performance of services, fostering of professional growth, and development of community support for the library. A descriptive non-statistical analysis of the type of activities has been produced resulting in the publication of a separate directory of FOL activities in Ohio. The questionnaire and accompanying letter used for the 1978 survey are attached. (ESR)

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A SURVEY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY RECENT ACTIVITIES IN OHIO:

Report--Description

by

Dulce DiDio McLean

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A SURVEY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY RECENT ACTIVITIES IN OHIO:

Report - Description

INTRODUCTION

A survey on the Friends of the Library (FOL) recent activities in Ohio was conducted in late 1978 to gather data for the compilation of a directory[1] of FOL activities in Ohio. This seemed an appropriate project to work on at that time since it related to that year's OLA Annual Conference theme 'Shaping Our Image.' The Ohio Library Association (OLA), its Division VII, and the Ohio Friends of the Library (OFL) sponsored the effort.

OBJECTIVES

The survey's primary purpose was to identify and provide a comprehensive summary listing of the Friends groups recent activities in support of Ohio libraries. The limitation to report the activities of the last six years was suggested to show that which can be useful to other groups at this time and in the near future.

The directory was intended to serve as a means of identifying the nature and extent of recent FOL activities; as motivation for the development of other Friends groups and activities; as encouragement for people to become involved and to support groups and their activities; and as a resource tool for communication and interchange of ideas for those seeking this type of information. It did not attempt to evaluate the activities and the Friends groups themselves.

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1. McLean, Dulce DiDio, Friends of the Library Activities in Ohio: 1973-1978, Columbus : Ohio Library Association, 1979, 73 p.

DISTRIBUTION

In October 1978, a cover letter and a form for the reporting of activities were sent with a self-addressed envelope to all public, branch, and academic libraries in the state. In general, libraries were permitted four weeks to reply. The public school, media center, institution and special libraries were addressed through a notice published in the Ohio Libraries and in the Ohio Friends of the Library Newsletter. See copy of the form report and cover letter at end.

After the first dealine expired, a second letter followed to those who had not replied. Since a few libraries requested extra time to respond, the final deadline for reporting was extended to January 1979. The follow-up survey was conducted to attempt a coverage as complete as possible.

The duration of the surveying process itself was four months, or five months when including the preparation of the manuscript for publication. This preparation included the organizing, editing, prefacing, and typing of the data collected. The OLA Executive Office handled all the details of mailing the survey materials.

Two endproducts of this effort were anticipated to be the publication of a directory of recent Friends activities, in joint sponsorship by OLA and OFL, and the preparation of a short article presenting a report - description of the survey.

RESPONSE

The analysis of the number of replies in relation to the number of requests sent out is not relevant since requests were mailed to all libraries in the state, not just to those known to have official FOL groups. The rationale was that the contacting of all libraries in the state would bring responses from groups not listed in the official Ohio Friends of the Library Directory. It seemed that not all libraries sent information to be included in the OFL Directory. In fact, the contrast between the number of libraries that sent reports of activities with those listed in the OFL Directory (1976 and 1978) shows that a larger number of libraries forwarded reports of activities in this survey request than those listed in the OFL Directory. One hundred and twenty-eight FOL groups sent reports of activities, while 106 and 73 groups, respectively, are listed in the OFL Directory for the years 1976 and 1978.

A total of 315 libraries replied to the survey. The distribution of libraries by type shows the responses to be as follows:

Academic	51
Public	259
Other	5

The distribution by type of the one hundred twenty-eight libraries which sent reports of activities is charted below:

Academic	11
Public	116
Other	1

ACTIVITIES

A statistical analysis of the type of activities by groups has not been made because most libraries have reported a variety of activities which fall within the same general categories; some libraries sent partial listings; and others reported only the highlights of their activities. Furthermore, the original intention of the survey was to produce a descriptive document and study.

In summary, the activities may be characterized by type as being fund raising and donation, acquisitions of special collections and physical materials, sponsorship of programs, performance of services, fostering of professional growth and development of community support for the library.

The descriptive analysis shows the trends of activities to fall within the following categories:

a) Financial support through the acquisitions of print and nonprint materials, the issuing of publications, holding of exhibits, and the purchasing of equipment, supplies, services, etc.; through the donation of funds for a variety of purposes such as passage of levies, building construction, renovation and furniture, scholarships; through direct fund raising projects, or indirectly through membership drives, sales, auctions, bazaars of books, materials, etc.

b) The sponsorship and organization of programs, tours, exhibits, displays, holding of special occasions for educational, entertainment, and public relations purposes.

c) Finally, there is the actual performance of service in a volunteer capacity either within or outside the library to shut-in members of the community, in support of levies, etc.

Funds are provided to the library either in cash, in kind, or service.

Public libraries' Friends groups emphasize programs, acquisitions, fund raising and volunteer service. Academic library groups stress programs, acquisitions of resources for the collections, issuing of publications, and donation of funds.

Public library groups issue a variety of publications such as newsletters, reports, book reviews, etc., to publicize library activities, special programs, to acknowledge gifts, etc.

Friends of academic libraries issue keepsakes, catalogs of exhibits and collections, and results of research studies.

The number of Friends activities per year varies, depending possibly on factors such as the size of group, how long it has been in existence, etc.

In general, activities denote the efforts of members of the Friends groups, either working individually or cooperatively. Of note, is the 'umbrella' type of working relationship, which represents cooperative efforts of the main library and its branches' Friends groups. Some of the activities are held in conjunction with other organizations such as service clubs, commercial enterprises, related special association and societies, etc. In this connection, the effort of a Friends group to support an out of state activity with the expectation that it would eventually serve Ohioans and the support of a Friends group lent to

an international book project should be pointed out.

In one instance, a Friends group broadened its sphere of activity by becoming a new incorporated historical society. There was also mention of support to, and cooperative activities with Junior or Young Friends of the Library.

One event reported in 1978 was the decision to celebrate 'Friends of the Library Month,' where the mayor and city council issued a resolution declaring April to be the 'Friends of the Library Month.' Another was the establishment of a 'Friend of the Year' award to be given for outstanding service to the library.

An event related to academic library Friends groups was a Student Senate vote to support the Friends with memberships.

SPECIAL COMMENTS

Some of the libraries reported not having FOL groups or not having active FOL groups, but sent comments. Some showed interest in the possible organization of Friends groups in their libraries and in their activities.

Some libraries commented that they had recently organized or reorganized their groups, and for this reason did not have activities to report at that time. They expected to have some activities to report in the future. Other libraries commented that although they did not have official Friends organizations, they received volunteer work from the community, either through individuals or organizations. Some wished they had a Friends group for support. Few simply indicated that they did not have active Friends. A certain group of libraries which have

inactive Friends are planning or are speculating to restart or reorganize.

There was also interest among these libraries to receive a copy of the directory when published, and to receive information on the mechanics of starting a group. The names of these libraries were transferred to the Ohio Friends of the Library organization for information and action if warranted.

CONCLUSION

In general, the survey revealed that a large number of libraries in Ohio are making use of the assistance that Friends groups can offer at many levels. A certain number are interested in organizing or reactivating groups to obtain their support.

By the activities of the last six years, one cannot but conclude that the Friends of the Library groups are a vital and growing force within the Ohio library milieu. Their various activities support the author's statement made in the original proposal to OLA and OFL for sponsorship of the compilation and publication of a Friends of the Library directory of recent activities in Ohio:

> "The Friends of the Library (FOL) organizations play an important part in library public relations generally by assisting in making libraries visible within their communities; by making the library's functions, work, problems, needs, and resources known and understood by these communities; by promoting, publicizing, and interpreting the library; and by arousing interest and influencing public opinion.
>
> Furthermore. in times of budgetary constraints, one can emphasize the FOL groups ability to help and the role they play in financial support: by assisting in fund raising, in collection development, in equipment purchasing. in attending to special needs, in contributing to volunteer service, etc."

It is our hope that both the survey and the directory have motivated the library community to develop other groups and activities, have encouraged more people to support the groups, and that the directory is being used as a tool for communication and interchange of ideas among Friends.

Founded 1095

OHIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

40 SOUTH THIRD STREET • COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215

(614) 221-0057

A. CHAPMAN PARSONS
Executive Director

Dear Friend:

The Ohio Friends of the Library and the O.L.A. Division VII, Research and Planning, are sponsoring a project for the publication of a Friends of the Library directory of activities in the state of Ohio. This effort recognizes the role that the Friends of the Library organizations play in library public relations and financial support.

The primary purpose of this directory is to identify and provide a comprehe sive listing of activities of the last five years of the Friends of the Library groups in support of Ohio libraries.

The directory aims at publicizing the nature and extent of recent Friends of the Library activities; at motivating the development of other Friends of the Library groups and activities; at encouraging more people to become involved and support the groups and their activities; and at serving as a resource tool for communication and interchange of ideas for those seeking this type of information.

Your cooperation is solicited in this phase of data collecting and is much needed for the success of this project. We would be very grateful if you could take some time to report the 1973-1977 activities of your group in support of your library. Form is enclosed for your use.

If your group has been inactive and does not have activities to report at this time or does not wish to do so, please return the form, so indicating.

Please, send report of activities, by
to Mrs. Dulce DiDio McLean
2231 Middlesex Drive
Toledo, Ohio 43606

Thank you in advance for the attention that you will devote to this request and for your cooperation.

Sincerely,
Dulce DiDio McLean
Dulce DiDio McLean
Assoc. Prof. of Libr. Admin.
Division VII, Action Council Member.

Ohio Friends of the Library Groups Survey of Recent Activities (1973-1978)

Be as specific as necessary and as brief as possible. Feel free to duplicate form to report as many activities as needed. See sample and examples below.

ACTIVITIES REPORT

LIBRARY: _____
(name) _____
FRIENDS GROUP: _____
(name) _____
MAILING ADDRESS: _____
_____
CONTACT PERSON: _____
(name) _____
ACTIVITIES
(by year)

(Use verso if needed)

Please return this report to Mrs. Duice DiDio McLean
2231 Middlesex Drive, Toledo, OH 43606

Date due: DEC. 8, 1978

Some examples of activities are:
Sponsorship of exhibits, conferences, sales trips, consultant work, additions to the staff, cash prices, scholarships, publications, etc.
Funding of remodeling, renovating, building projects, etc.
Lobbying for funds, raising of funds for special purposes, etc.
Purchases and donations of books, collections, equipment, furnishings, etc.
Hosting of social or other special functions, volunteer work, etc.

Sample reports:
1973. Gave a scholarship for library school attendance.
1974. Nothing to report.
1975. Purchased books for the Rare Book Room.
Financed the attendance of a library staff member to ALA Annual Conference.
Established the Ballet Special Collection.
1976. Acquired the rare first editions of ..... (give at least author, title)
Secured gifts of books to the library.
Hosted reception in honor of the retiring Head Librarian.
1977. Sponsored the publication of the history of the library (give at least author, title).
Sponsored the local author's exhibit.
Donated a movie projector to the library.
Financed the remodeling of the Rare Book Room.